GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2629
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Environmental Pollution in Rural Areas
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the environment is getting polluted especially in rural areas;
(b) if so, the corrective steps taken in this regard including awareness generation about pollution control measures amongst the rural public;
(c) the amount allocated for mitigation of pollution during the last three years and the current year, State-wise including Rajasthan in this regard; and
(d) the details of specific directions proposed to be issued and facilities likely to be provided to the State Governments to control pollution?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) / Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) is monitoring air quality, water quality and noise levels across the country under National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP), National Water Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP) and National Ambient Noise Monitoring Network (NANMN) respectively. The NAMP network comprises 612 operating monitoring stations located in 254 cities/towns in 29 states and 5 UTs. The NWMP network comprises of 2500 locations covering 445 rivers, 154 lakes, 12 tanks, 78 ponds, 25 canals, 41 creeks, 45 drains, 10 water treatment plants and 807 groundwater wells in 29 states and 6 UTs. The NANMN network covers 7 metro cities. CPCB does not have monitoring network in rural areas. However ambient air quality monitoring is conducted in 04 locations in rural areas in Punjab under NAMP. The analysis of air quality data during 2015 indicates that the values of SO2 and NO2 within the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) put particulate matter exceeding the NAAQS at all 4 locations.

(b) The measures taken by the Government to control pollution inter alia include the following:-
(i) Notification of National Ambient Air Quality Standards envisaging 12 pollutants;
(ii) Formulation of environmental regulations / statutes;
(iii) Setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air including noise and water quality;
(iv) Introduction of cleaner / alternate fuels like gaseous fuel (CNG, LPG etc.), ethanol blend etc.;
(v) Promotion of cleaner production processes; and
(vi) Preparation of action plan for sewage management and restoration of water quality in aquatic resources by State Governments.

Taking note of the gravity of pollution, the Government has taken some more measures which include:

(i) Launched National Air Quality index by the Prime Minister in April, 2015;
(ii) Decision taken to leapfrog directly from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards by 1st April, 2020;
(iii) Taxing polluting vehicles and incentivizing hybrid and electric vehicles;
(iv) Mitigating action to comply with effluent standards by SPCBs / PCCs to improve the water quality of the rivers;
(v) Comprehensive amendments to various Waste Management Rules including Municipal Solid Waste, Plastic Waste, Hazardous Waste, Bio-medical Waste and Electronic Waste notified;
(vi) Expanding ambit of Solid Waste and Plastic Waste Management Rules to rural areas;
(vii) Notification of Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules.
(viii) Ban on burning of leaves, biomass, municipal solid waste;
(ix) Financial assistance for installation of Common Effluent Treatment Plants for cluster of Small Scale Industrial units;
(x) Revision of existing environmental standards and formulation of new standards for prevention and control of pollution from industries;
(xi) Regular co-ordination meetings at official and ministerial level with Delhi and other State Governments within the NCR;
(xii) Issuance of directions under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and under Section 18(1)(b) of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981;
(xiii) Issuance of directions for Zero Liquid Discharge / water conservation;
(xiv) Installation of on-line continuous (24x7) monitoring devices by major industries; and
(xv) Setting up of a control room in CPCB to review and monitor air quality.

The steps taken for awareness generation regarding the pollution control measures include:

(i) Issuing of advertisements in print and electronic media;
(ii) Conducting of field level awareness campaigns;

(iii) Consultation before finalization of standards/rules etc. by calling comments from stakeholders and public;
(iv) Conducting of workshops for stakeholders;
(v) Dissemination of information to the public through web portal and electronic display;
(vi) Running of special trains which included the Science Express Climate Action Special flagged off on 15-10-2015.

(c) The amount allocated for mitigation of pollution during the last three years and the current year, State-wise including Rajasthan is annexed.

(d) The CPCB has issued directions under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and under Section 18(1)(b) of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 to Delhi Pollution Control Committee and State Pollution Control Boards of NCR states for initiating time bound action for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution and improvement of Air Quality which inter alia include control of vehicular emissions; control of road dust/re-suspension of dust and other fugitive emission; control of air pollution from bio-mass burning; control of industrial air pollution; control of air pollution from construction and demolition activities; and other steps to control pollution.

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